Saugeen Valley Conservation Authority

1997 - 1999 Report

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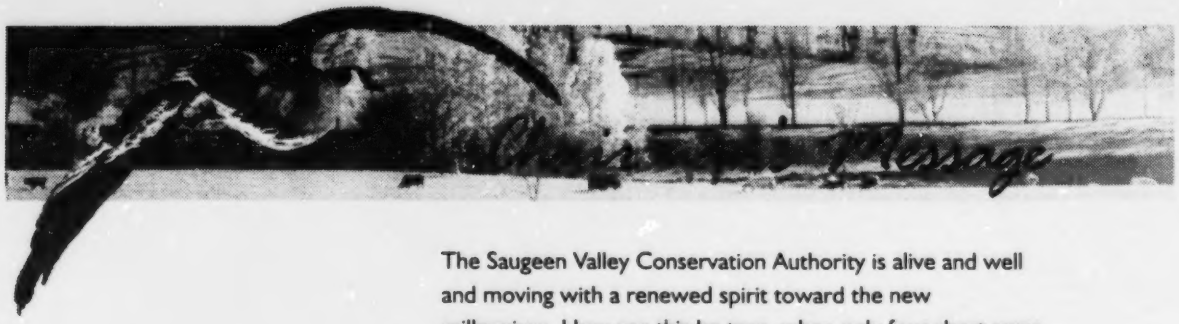

The Saugeen Valley Conservation Authority is alive and well and moving with a renewed spirit toward the new millennium. How can this be true, when only four short years ago, the province withdrew the bulk of provincial funds from Authorities? The answer is patience, accountability, flexibility and, above all, hard work.

Conservation Authorities are vibrant local organizations comprised of municipally appointed individuals who have the interest of their communities at heart. While it is true that there are provincial guidelines under which some programs must operate, most programs are designed and implemented at the local level to meet the needs and requirements of the watershed.

Municipal partners of the SVCA provided a solid vote of confidence in 1995 by voting unanimously to continue the work of the Authority. They generously allowed staff time to establish new priorities for the Authority and to forge ahead with a new direction and a renewed sense of spirit and commitment. The real key to success is being open to opportunities, assessing them, and then making a decision for the betterment of the watershed.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all our member municipalities, the Province of Ontario, and, of course, our local organizations and individuals who contribute in many ways to the work of the Authority. Also, special appreciation is extended to the Saugeen Valley Conservation Foundation for its dedication to the health of the watershed by providing much needed funding. I would also like to thank the staff for their continued dedication to conservation, and more importantly, their talents and creativity in finding innovative ways to serve the community.

Respectfully yours

Lawrence Copeland
Chairman

SAUGEEN
CONSERVATION

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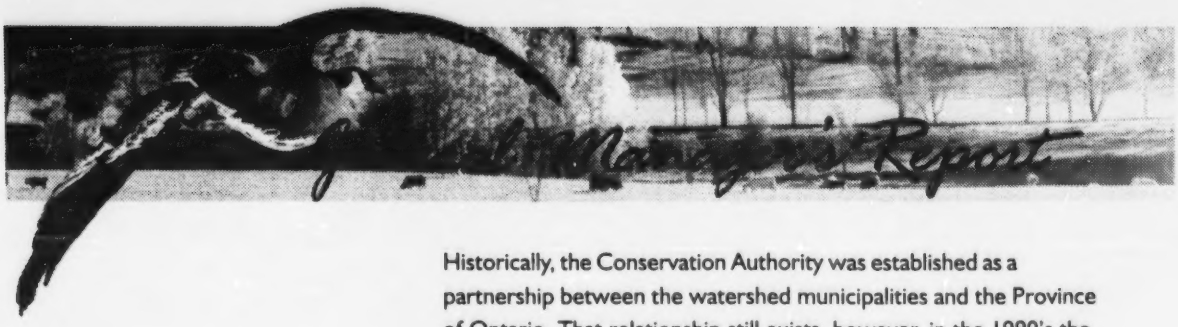
"Conservation Authorities are vibrant local organizations comprised of municipally appointed individuals who have the interest of their communities at heart."

Chairman Lawrence Copeland (right) and MP Ovid Jackson SVCA Headquarters C.A., Hanover



Historically, the Conservation Authority was established as a partnership between the watershed municipalities and the Province of Ontario. That relationship still exists, however, in the 1990's the need for greater local involvement has become even more important.

The financial restructuring of the Conservation Authority in the mid 1990's kick-started the increased need for self-reliance, self-determination, creativity and community participation.

Over the past two years, Authority programs have changed significantly. Rather than the traditional 'go-it-alone' approach, programs are now jointly delivered wherever possible, as in the case of the Grey Bruce Forestry Service, a joint forest management program of the Saugeen Valley and Grey Sauble Conservation Authorities.

Other successful joint programs with the Grey Sauble Conservation Authority include Conservation Nature Tours and WREN (conservation education programs for schools). Conservation Nature Tours is not only a combined effort of the two Authorities, but even more significant is the fact that it is delivered by many private sector partners with the partial funding from the federal and provincial governments.

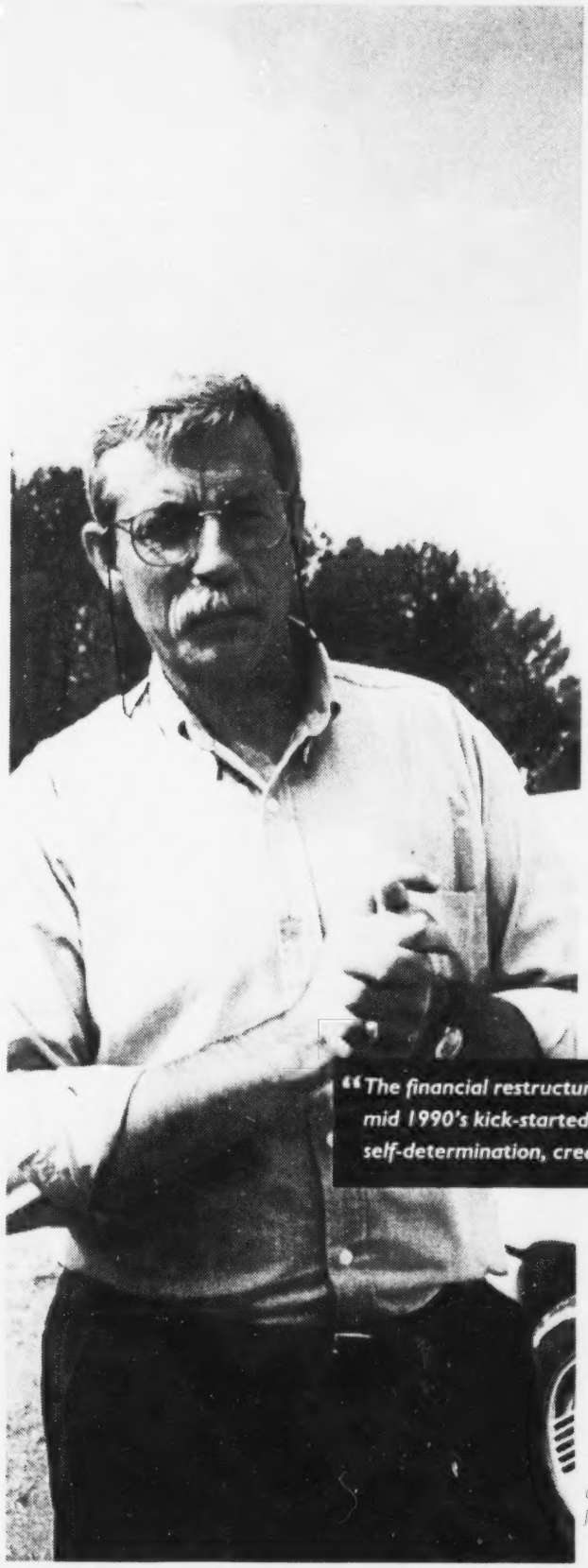
A third form of program delivery that has developed is in providing project management services to the programs of local service and interest groups. An excellent example of this is the implementation of the Mount Forest Wetland Sanctuary Project.

The maintenance of Conservation Areas, such as McBeath, Varney, Allan Park and the Headquarters, is being assisted by volunteer groups and interested individuals. Conservation education programs are being delivered under new partnerships such as municipal summer recreation programs and the Bruce Nuclear Power Development Information Centre. Events such as the Maple Syrup Festival and Christmas in the Country, are undertaken by the Saugeen Valley Conservation Foundation and its army of volunteers.

The successful delivery of conservation programs for the betterment of the watershed resources and its residents is increasingly dependent on partnerships and cooperation. At no time in the past has the Authority slogan been more true - *Conservation Through Cooperation*.

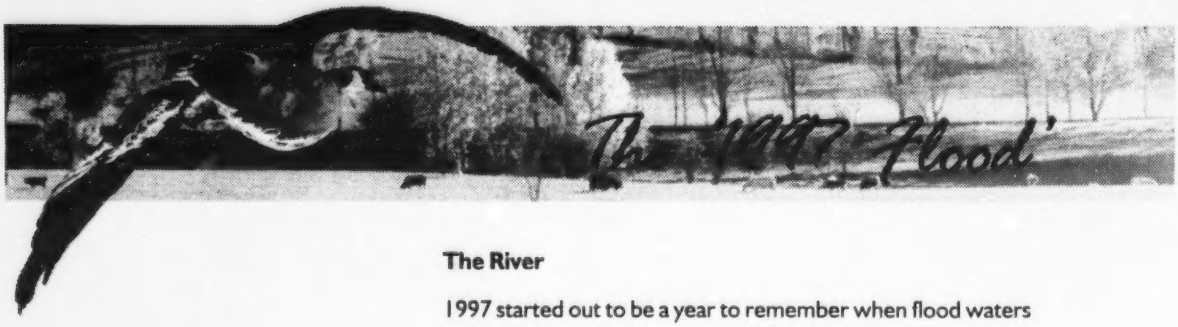
James H. Coffey
General Manager/ Secretary-Treasurer

SAUGEEN CONSERVATION



"The financial restructuring of the Conservation Authority in the mid 1990's kick-started the increased need for self-reliance, self-determination, creativity and community participation."

General Manager Secretary Treasurer James H. Coffey



The River

1997 started out to be a year to remember when flood waters built up and raced through the Town of Durham in January and February of that year.

Just before New Year's Eve in 1996, staff began to monitor conditions along the upper Saugeen River, in and around the Town of Durham, when weather conditions turned mild, increasing the flows.

In January, temperatures dropped significantly. This, combined with a number of other factors, began to facilitate the formation of 'frazil ice'.

The production of frazil ice in the river channel above Durham is an annual and historic phenomenon. On cold winter nights the surface of a swiftly flowing stream may become cooled well below zero degrees, especially in reaches of rapids and turbulent flow where exposed droplets of water experience extreme heat flux. Such "supercooled" water, mixing with the warmer layers beneath, produces a spongy mass of ice crystals known as frazil ice. When water freezes under these supercooled conditions, the molecular bonds are stronger and in a more linear configuration than ice formed under normal conditions.

In addition to frazil ice, another type of ice known as 'anchor ice' can also form. This occurs when rocks in the stream or river bed become cool enough to freeze the water that flows around them. During the day, the rocks may heat up and release these mats of 'anchor ice'. The masses of frazil and anchor ice can combine to form 'flocs' or floating ice. These can, in turn, freeze together to produce 'ice pancakes', which continue to grow in size as they flow downstream. There are approximately 22 kilometres (14 miles) of river above the Town of Durham, with channel and gradient characteristics capable of producing frazil ice.

Conditions leading up to the Flood

The following conditions are some of the factors which contributed to the flood occurrence in the Town of Durham.

- relatively high flows in the river in early January - delaying the normal process of ice cover formation.

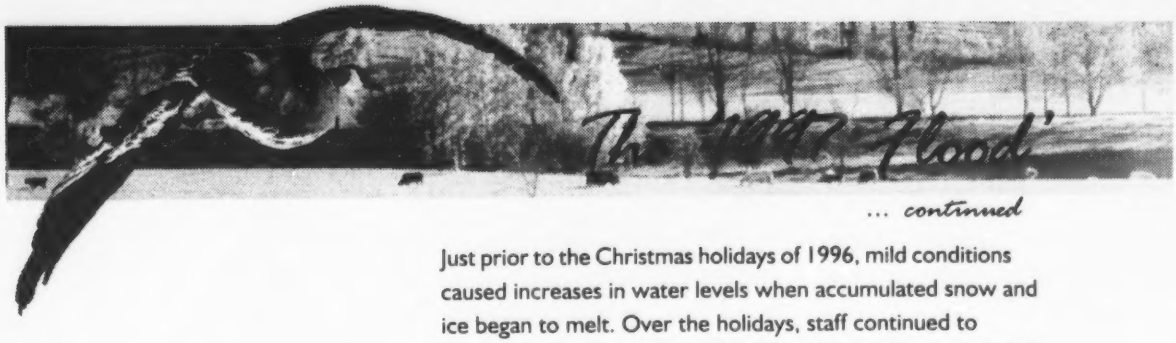
- extended period of weather conditions during and immediately after the high flow event that produced extreme wind chill temperatures and heavy snowfall.
- the production of both frazil and anchor ice.
- snow, either falling directly into the river or blown in by winds, contributing to ice formation.
- a natural meandering channel configuration in the flats below the Town contributing to the floating ice collecting and evolving into an ice jam blockage.
- possible unknown factors, such as fallen trees or shifting gravel bars in the channel that may have aggravated free flow and stimulated ice accumulation.
- probable reduction of ice storage capacity downstream of the Town from ice that had remained in place from the earlier accumulation.

SVCA's Role

Flood control staff of any Conservation Authority are always on the alert and especially watchful when conditions in the watershed are such that the potential for flooding exists. The presence of ice very much affects this condition and is continuously monitored, in terms of movement, type, melting versus freezing, potential for blockages, etc.

Above: Queen and South Streets, Town of Durham.

Left: Gary Senior, Enviromental Planner, looking at frazil ice buildup in the Saugeen River.



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Just prior to the Christmas holidays of 1996, mild conditions caused increases in water levels when accumulated snow and ice began to melt. Over the holidays, staff continued to monitor the situation, especially when the weather turned cold and conditions, ripe for the formation of frazil ice, persisted. In January of 1997, frazil ice began to accumulate and blockages resulted within the Town of Durham. Water began seeping into low-lying areas of the Town of Durham. As floodwaters threatened wider areas of the Town, evacuation measures were undertaken. High-hoes were called in during this period in an attempt to remove the frazil ice and free blockages. Unfortunately, conditions worsened and river waters poured into the low-lying areas of the Town, turning residential streets into raging torrents of water. The Town declared a State of Emergency, and Emergency Measures Ontario (EMO) personnel were called in to assist Town and SVCA officials.

SVCA staff monitored conditions throughout the flood period on an 'around the clock' basis along with the Town of Durham and staff from the Grey Sauble Conservation Authority. Literally hundreds of individuals, organizations, downtown businesses and local groups lent a helping hand during the flood, providing food, shelter and financial assistance. Emergency response teams within the Town also worked around the clock providing emergency assistance in every way possible. The Canadian Armed Forces were also called in and maintained an 'around the clock' vigil, keeping the public clear of the emergency area and assisting in flood control measures.

High-hoes also worked around the clock removing frazil ice from the choked waterway in an attempt to 'get the water moving'. Giant hills of frazil ice, rising nine metres into the air, began to accumulate along the river banks, due to the steady removal process.

Flood conditions continued to be a threat in January and well into February when a second flood 'occurrence' took place.

As a result of the threat of frazil ice in the Town of Durham and the potential of flooding, various flood control measures were introduced in the summer of 1997. The river was dredged in designated locations within the Town, removing some of the 'shallows' and thereby decreasing the potential of

frazil ice formation in the winter months. The basic objective of the remedial measures was to remove potential obstacles allowing the free flow and discharge of ice further downstream, where the effects are less destructive.

Frazil ice problems have always been a threat during the winter months in the Saugeen watershed. The flood warning department monitors river and ice conditions on a full time basis, especially when conditions are conducive to the formation of frazil ice. As a result of this most recent flood occurrence, the SVCA has placed more emphasis on regular workshops for member municipalities (clerks, road superintendents and engineers), staff and Directors to keep them informed about flood procedures, roles and responsibilities as well as communication policies of the various organizations involved. Staff of the SVCA have now had formal training through Emergency Measures Ontario on procedures and steps involved with emergency situations.

Above: Layers of frazil ice accumulation along the banks of the Saugeen River within the Town of Durham.

Left: Flooding on Queen Street.

Sanctuary Project

On behalf of local service clubs and the former Town of Mount Forest, the SVCA is coordinating the implementation of the Mount Forest Wetland Sanctuary Project.

What was once a stagnant, sediment filled reservoir is being converted into a stable wetland environment that will provide habitat for plants, as well as fish and animals, right in the heart of the community of Mount Forest on the South Saugeen River. Earlier engineering studies concluded that the reservoir was in a deteriorated state, due primarily to extensive amounts of sediment which has accumulated since the construction of the original dam in 1856. These studies also concluded that the reservoir could be rehabilitated into a wetland environment which would provide habitat for birds and animals as well as provide educational and recreational opportunities.

The total cost of the project was estimated at $200,000, with work to begin in 1998.

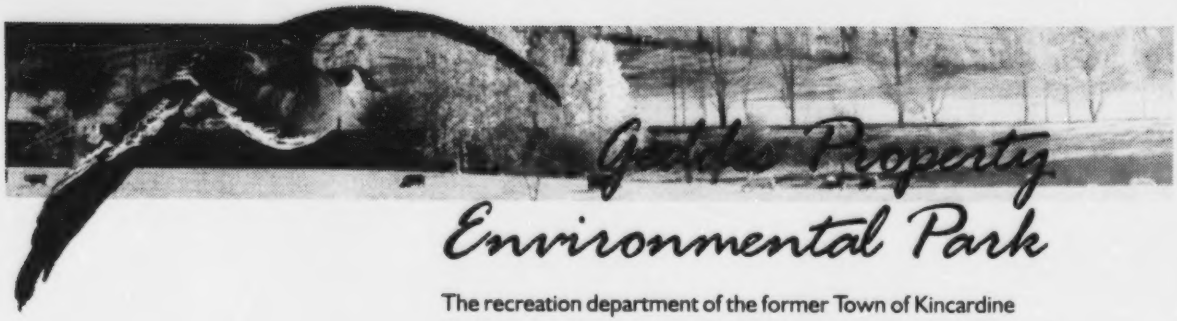
Funds raised locally by the steering committee were matched by larger donations from government agencies, corporations and foundations. The project's largest donation came from the Environment Canada Action 21 Program which donated close to $70,000. Fundraising activities have been very successful.

Construction began in 1998 with the implementation of an in-reservoir barrier to concentrate flows away from the reservoir along the south shoreline. This has helped to stabilise the 'wetland' area. 1999 activities included the planting of various wetland species, the construction of a trail system, ongoing education about the project and its benefits, as well as signage to direct people to certain access areas and keep them informed about the wetland and its inhabitants.

This community project has involved many groups and individuals within the town, all working together towards a common goal of improving the environment.

WATER MANAGEMENT

Construction of an in-reservoir barrier on the South Saugeen River, Mount Forest, to assist in wetland creation.



Geddes Property Environmental Park

The recreation department of the former Town of Kincardine hired the Conservation Authority to coordinate the planning of an 'Environmental Park' at a location known as the Geddes property.

In 1997, Authority staff researched and wrote a park development plan which concluded that an environmental park would be the most appropriate use of this 5.5 hectare (13 acre) parcel of land, consisting of floodplain areas, steep slopes and actively eroding river banks. The development plan called for the implementation of a trail system, wildlife gardens, river access locations and stairways.

The construction of the project is being co-ordinated by the SVCA on behalf of The Men of the Trees, Bruce County Branch.

Engineering design of the structures and landscape plans were completed in 1998 and are being used in fundraising activities in the community. Total cost of the project was estimated at $116,000. A number of applications were made to various agencies for project funding.

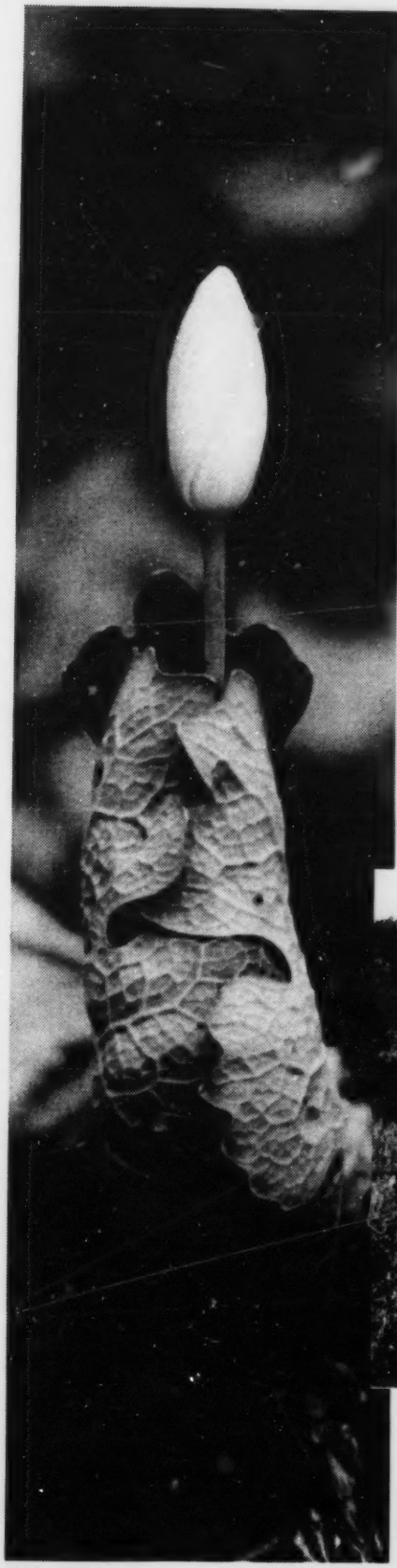
Construction of the project began in 1999 with the installation of trails throughout the property. Commemorative trees have also been planted on site. These trees will be made available to individuals in the community who wish to purchase a tree for a family or friend as a tribute to a special event or occasion. 1999 was also the year that the property was made available, for the first time, to the general public. The property will provide recreational values, in terms of hiking, photography, picnicking, etc., and can also be utilised by school children for outdoor educational purposes.

Monetary Contributions:

- Environment Canada EcoAction 2000 Program
- Kincardine Sesquicentennial
- Canada Trust Friends of the Environment Foundation

In-kind contributions:

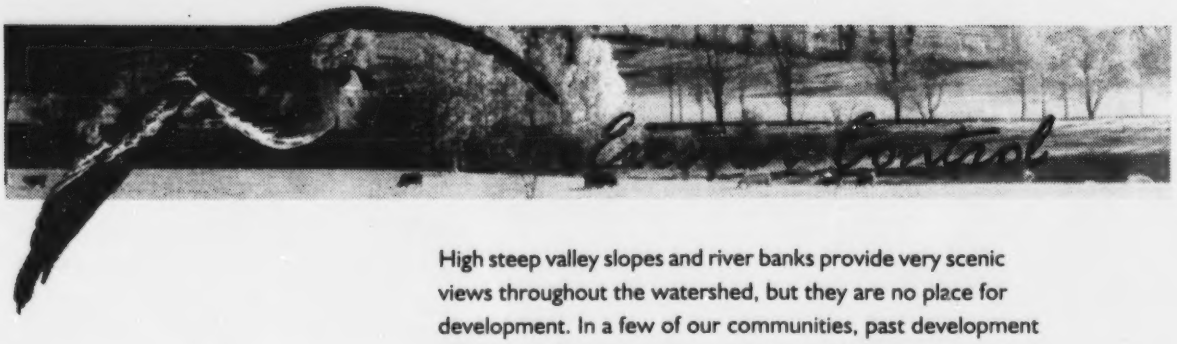
- Men of the Trees
- Kincardine High School
- Municipality of Kincardine



Plans will continue to develop for this interesting piece of property located in the heart of the Town of Kincardine along the Penetangore River. Completion of the project is scheduled for fall 2000.

Above: Geddes property, Kincardine, prior to commencement of the habitat creation project.

Left: Bloodroot, a common woodland species.



High steep valley slopes and river banks provide very scenic views throughout the watershed, but they are no place for development. In a few of our communities, past development has occurred in very close proximity to slopes that are not stable or are being actively eroded, causing structural problems for homes, businesses and roads. Some of the slope problems have been caused or worsened by development activities.

Capital Projects *(the corrective measure)*

Two major 'types' of projects fall under this category. 'Capital' erosion control measures are large scale projects which occur on public lands, typically owned by a municipality. In the Saugeen watershed, capital projects completed in the early and mid 1990's were funded 85% by the Province and 15% by the benefiting municipality.

Capital projects can be described as a 'corrective' measure, or one in which a solution or project is completed to rectify an existing problem. Many of our earlier settlements, including towns and villages, were erected at the turn of the century, when knowledge about floodplains and hazard areas were limited at best.

Funding for 'capital' projects is no longer available through the Province of Ontario. This was eliminated in 1997. The Saugeen Valley Conservation Authority, however, in addition to other Conservation Authorities across the Province of Ontario, put a great deal of effort into 'preventative' measures through land use planning processes which ensure that development does not occur in flood plains or hazard areas.

Private Landowner Erosion Control Projects

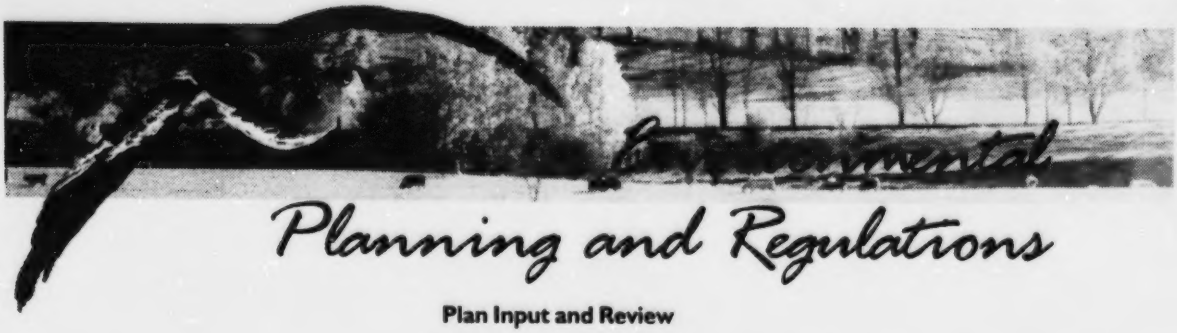
Funding and/or grants for erosion control projects on private lands was also eliminated by the Province of Ontario in 1998. A grant of 25% of the total cost of projects was provided in 1997. Currently, there are no grants for private erosion control measures.

One erosion control project was completed in 1998, with the landowner covering 100% of the total costs.

Update

Conservation Ontario, an umbrella organization for Conservation Authorities across the province, has been working with the provincial government with respect to reinstating a grant system for this program. Erosion control projects improve fish habitat and water quality, by reducing the amount of sedimentation in a watercourse.

Above and left: Examples of erosion problems in the Saugeen watershed.



Environmental Planning and Regulations

Plan Input and Review

There were considerable changes to the Environmental Planning and Regulations programs at the SVCA in 1997-99 in light of the Authority's re-structuring in 1996. With the Authority's increased emphasis on partnerships, the SVCA negotiated and entered into planning services agreements with the counties of Bruce, Wellington and Huron along with other participating Conservation Authorities. These environmental planning agreements, established for the first time, expanded responsibilities for the Authority as well as maintaining the traditional commenting functions. Plan review responsibilities that previously were assigned to provincial ministries now were delegated to municipalities, who in turn contracted with the Authority for assistance with their environmental policies. The agreements also set fees to be paid by proponents in compensation for the planning services provided by the Authority. While these agreements originated as a consequence of substantially reduced transfer payments from the province to the SVCA and an overall re-design of the provincial planning system, it has provided an enhanced role for the Authority in the municipal planning process as well as a greater say in protecting the watershed environment.

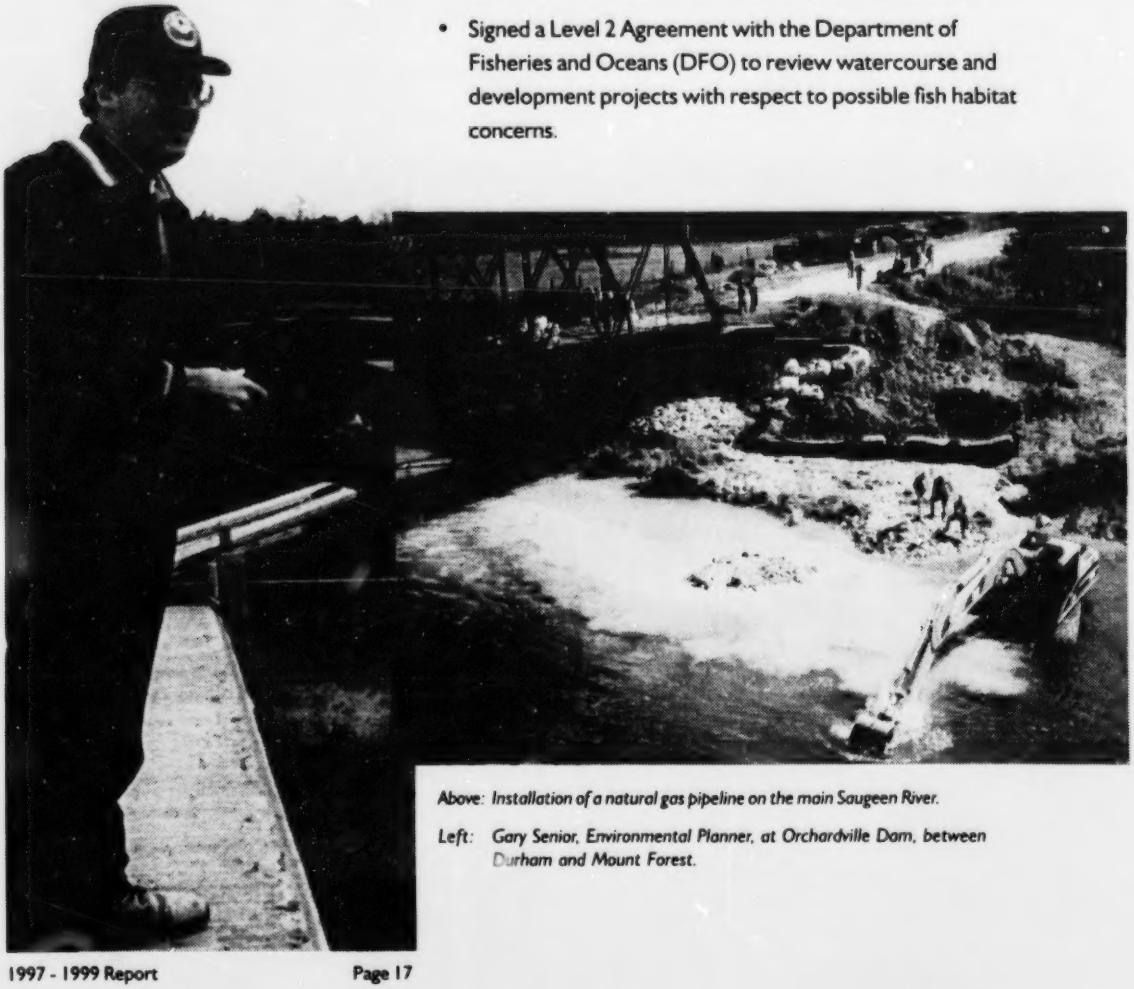
Plan input, which is the providing of information and comments to municipalities during the preparation stage of a planning document, remained a significant element of the planning program in 1997-99. The main highlights were new official plans in both Bruce and Grey counties, which were finalised in 1998, and included contributions by the SVCA.

In other areas of plan input, the Authority provided a high level of service as indicated by some of the examples listed below.

- Hazard land mapping for Brant Township was presented at open houses on June 26th and 27th, 1997. Follow-up site inspections were done by the Authority, with the information provided to the township.
- In March, 1997 a landowner's appeal of Proton Township's new comprehensive zoning by-law and the mapping done by the Authority was dismissed by the Ontario Municipal Board.

WATER MANAGEMENT

- Updated mapping and environmental policies were developed for the Town of Kincardine's Official Plan.
- Input and comments were supplied to Wellington County for their updated Official Plan, along with hazard land mapping for the Village of Clifford.
- In 1998 new hazard land mapping was incorporated into the updated comprehensive zoning by-law for Greenock Township, along with mapping showing natural heritage features.
- Input and comments were provided for the Walkerton Official Plan.
- Signed an agreement in 1999 with Wetland Habitat Fund (WHF) to provide administration services. Staff also sit on the Technical Review Committee.
- Updated comprehensive zoning by-law for the former Township of Kincardine, including two open houses.
- Signed a Level 2 Agreement with the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) to review watercourse and development projects with respect to possible fish habitat concerns.



Above: Installation of a natural gas pipeline on the main Saugeen River.

Left: Gary Senior, Environmental Planner, at Orchardville Dam, between Durham and Mount Forest.

Planning and Regulations

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Fill, Construction and Alteration to Waterways Regulations

The Regulations program (Revised Regulations of Ontario 169/90) remained critical to achieving many of the SVCA's goals and objectives for preventing problems associated with natural hazards and for promoting environmental protection. 1997 to 1999 proved to be challenging years for this program due to re-structuring of the Authority. Refinements were made to the Regulations program to help streamline the service and to focus on key issues.

On the permit administration side of the program in 1997, 46 permits were issued and 60 permits were granted in 1998. A total of 60 applications were processed in 1999. On the enforcement side this function continued in importance as it helps to both protect the environment and to ensure the regulations are applied fairly and consistently. Staff investigated 11 violations over the two years. Although the Authority attempts to resolve violations without having to resort to legal action, this is not always feasible. In June, 1997 a landowner was found guilty in Provincial Offences court of contravening the regulations and was fined the maximum amount under the Conservation Authorities Act. In 1998 a charge was laid against a landowner in Hanover for illegally dumping fill, but the site was restored before having to proceed to court.

Special Programs

- *1999 Summer Experience Program:*
  Carrie Musselman from Artemesia Township for 14 weeks to assist the Environmental Planning program.
- *1998 Summer Experience Program:*
  Sam Ziemann from Clifford for 16 weeks to assist the Environmental Planning program.
- *1997 Job Creation Partnerships, Human Resources Development:*
  Jason Dodds from Huron Township for 26 weeks to assist the Environmental Planning program and with conservation information.

1997 Durham Flood

The 1997 flood in the Town of Durham was largely due to frazil ice accumulation rather than flow volume in the Saugeen River. Though river flows were higher than normal they were well below flood stage. It was ice blockage of the channel that elevated the river to flood levels. Floodplain mapping calculations assume 'free flow' conditions rather than ice-induced elevations, so direct comparisons on a volume basis of the 1997 flood to design floods cannot be made. A general comparison, however, based on peak flood elevations, only shows the incredible magnitude of the 1997 flood. The 1997 flood level exceeded the height of the projected Regional Storm flood by 2 to 3 feet in some locations and it exceeded the projected 100 Year flood level by more than nine feet in the south part of town! The flood was almost 11 feet higher than normal flow levels in the river below the Lower Dam!

Above: Gary Senior, Environmental Planner, at a site meeting in Carrick Township.

Left: Jo-Anne Harbinson, Environmental Planning Technician, conducts a site inspection on the installation of a natural gas pipeline under the main Saugeen River.

for Coastal Conservation

The SVCA is proud to be a partner with the Lake Huron Centre for Coastal Conservation in providing ongoing conservation programs and measures associated with the sensitive shoreline areas of the watershed. The 'Centre' functions as a local coastal management resources team for participating Conservation Authorities, member municipalities, government agencies and the general public.

Over the past three years, the Centre has provided services and expertise relating to shoreline management issues. The following are some of those accomplishments:

Projects:

- threatened dune species planting (Southampton)
- Coastal Environmental Impact Report (Eidt's Grove)
- dune restoration evaluation (Poplar Beach, Huron Township)
- plant surveys of Chantry Dunes (Southampton)
- assessment of dune and beach erosion control projects (Southampton and Port Elgin)
- research project, in association with Environment Canada and the University of Waterloo, on the effects of climate change on Lake Huron communities

Information and Education

- responded to requests for information
- presentations at various Beach Association meetings in Bruce County
- produced and manned a display at the BNPD safety fair
- attended State of the Lakes Ecosystem Conference
- produced four newsletters on various shoreline/coastal issues
- hosted a major conference in August, 1999 entitled: Lake Huron - Is the Coast Clear?
- continued to liaise with organizations such as the International Joint Commission and the Great Lakes Institute with regard to updated information on coastal issues

SHORE MANAGEMENT

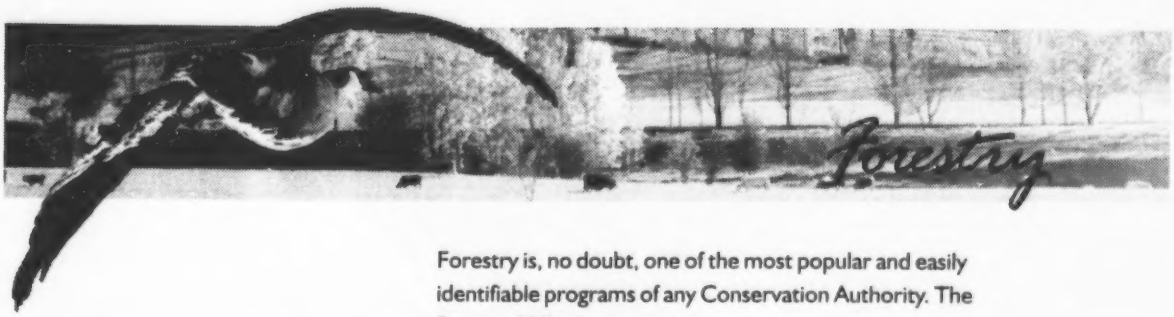
- on Steering Committee for the bi-national "Lake Huron Initiative", a forum for basin-wide management
- continued liaison with Conservation Authorities
- work with local tourism associations to investigate the possibility of providing coastal information and education to shoreline users during the summer months
- development and implementation of "Lake Huron's beach and dune ecosystems" educational resources kit for senior elementary students within the Bluewater District Board of Education

Landowner Services

- reviewed land use planning proposals
- reviewed and commented on Kincardine Marina Expansion proposal
- provided technical advisory services for landowners

Above: Numerous classes participated in the planting of special grasses to stabilise significant dune areas.

Left: Signage placed on lakeshore dunes served to inform the public about valuable conservation projects.



Forestry is, no doubt, one of the most popular and easily identifiable programs of any Conservation Authority. The Saugeen Valley is no exception.

Since 1950, the SVCA has planted over 6 million trees throughout the vast watershed area. Over the past three years, the Authority has planted over 158,000 trees. In addition, they have ordered 96,000 trees for private landowners who wished to undertake their own tree planting.

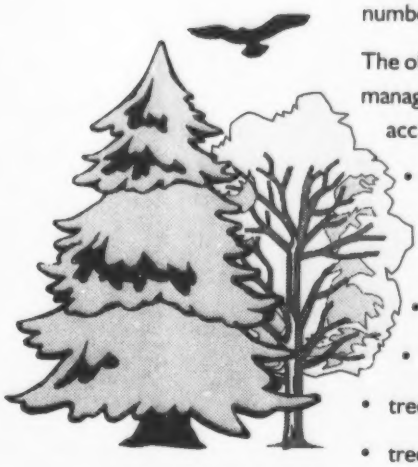
The SVCA also handles larger tree stock for member municipalities and interested landowners. Since 1997, 5000 trees have been ordered through the SVCA for special plantings. Some of those trees, for example, are designated for neighbourhood streets and roads, beautifying the towns and villages within the Saugeen watershed.

Grey Bruce Forestry Service *(New Partnerships)*

In 1997, a new development occurred within the Forestry Departments of the Saugeen Valley and Grey Sauble Conservation Authorities. The SVCA and the GSCA joined together to develop a forestry program designed to deliver a number of services to watershed landowners.

The objective of the program is to promote the wise management of local forest resources. Experienced and accredited staff are available to provide the following:

- technical advice
- forest management planning (Managed Forest Tax Incentive Program)
- forest stand inventory and mapping
- tending
- tree planting and vegetation control
- tree marking
- pest control
- education and resource information
- forestry equipment rentals and supply depot services



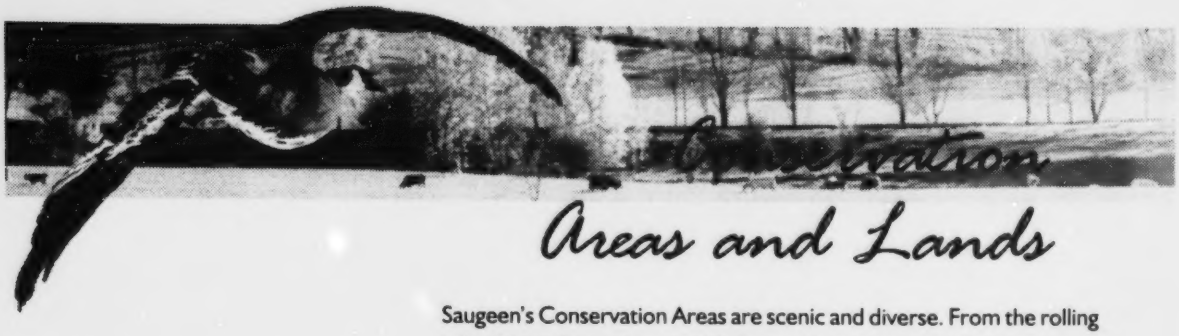
LAND MANAGEMENT

This beneficial program, through the partnership of both Conservation Authorities, has worked very well in providing a valuable program to the landowners of both watersheds and ensuring that our natural resources, such as forests and wood lots, are maintained for the benefit of future generations.

The Grey Bruce Forestry Service has also been actively involved in providing input into local forest interest groups. The Grey County Forest Stewardship Network, for example, was formed in 1996 and comprises of a mix of government, business and private individuals who provide leadership in forestry related issues. As well, staff from the SVCA are also involved with the Grey County Woodlot Association. The purpose of this organization is to provide a forum for landowners with forestry related interests.

Above: Hundreds of children participate in tree planting activities each year.

Left: Jim Penner, Forest Management Coordinator.



Conservation Areas and Lands

Saugeen's Conservation Areas are scenic and diverse. From the rolling hills of Allan Park, to scenic McGowan Falls, located in Durham, Saugeen's natural areas offer a wide variety of recreational opportunities for the young and old alike.

SVCA divides its lands into two categories; Conservation Areas and Conservation Lands

Conservation Areas (Camping Parks)

Saugeen Bluffs Conservation Area

Located along the beautiful Saugeen River, this Conservation Area takes in some of the towering bluffs which rise high above the river. These bluffs were carved by the river thousands of years ago as it made its way to Lake Huron. A mature maple forest is the setting for this picturesque campground complete with large spacious sites. Visitors are located well apart from their neighbours, providing a peaceful and relaxing camping atmosphere.

Over the past few years, improvements to Saugeen Bluffs have included additional electrical and serviced sites, paving of the road into the park, re-surfacing of roads, the construction of a new picnic shelter, an addition to the camp store, expansion of the playground area and the availability of kayak rentals (as well as canoes). In addition, the scenic look-out trail, a guided trail to the top of the bluffs looking down over the winding Saugeen River, has also been re-signed and surfaced for campers and day-use visitors.

Brucedale Conservation Area

This relatively small, but quaint campground is located on the shores of Lake Huron. It offers beautifully shaded campsites, in a quiet and peaceful setting. For the 'campers' at heart, Brucedale has limited facilities but provides a true camping experience.

Improvements to this park over the past three years have included the construction of a shower building.

Durham Conservation Area

Located in the Town of Durham, this park hugs the scenic upper Saugeen River. Campsites are tucked in amongst mature cedars. McGowan falls is a 'must see' feature in this C.A. Improvements to this park consisted of road maintenance, additional serviced sites, trail enhancement, and the construction of a new gate house.

Conservation Areas and Lands (Day-use)

Headquarters Conservation Area

This is one of the most popular day-use areas of the SVCA. Improvements to this area consisted of trail enhancement, the addition of new exotic bird species in the pheasant barn and new signage.

Allan Park Management Unit

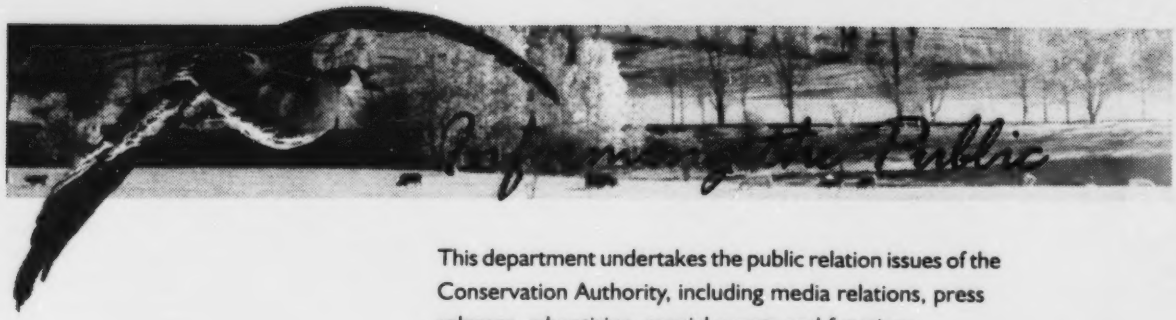
One of the most popular sites in Saugeen Country for cross-country skiers and hikers alike, this property is made up of a variety of diverse upland hardwood species. Rolling terrain and rugged trails guide you easily through this beautiful piece of property. This is also one of the few day-use areas which is a managed forest. Improvements to this location consisted of new signage, trail maintenance and the addition of fishing equipment to assist regular anglers at the Allan Park trout pond.

Improvements to other popular day-use Conservation Areas and Lands, such as Stoney Island, Kinghurst and McBeath consisted of new trail development and signage.

New brochures have also been developed for most of Saugeen's Conservation Areas. Assistance in creating and developing the brochures was made possible through Human Resources Development Canada (Job Creation Program). The SVCA has been very fortunate in acquiring the assistance of numerous volunteers and interest groups in the maintenance and care of some of its Conservation Areas.

Above: Visitors at Headquarters Conservation Area.

Left: Nature appreciation at Greenock Swamp Wetland Complex.



This department undertakes the public relation issues of the Conservation Authority, including media relations, press releases, advertising, special events and functions, publications, presentations and programs for local interest and community groups who wish to be updated on the endeavours of the Conservation Authority.

Over the past three years there have been a number of developments and initiatives!

Reach Out.....and TALK.....TALK....TALK!

Each year numerous talks and presentations are given to local interest groups in an effort to keep them updated on 'conservation issues and programs'! Horticultural groups, Rotary, Optimists, Municipalities, Legions, Women's Institutes, are just some of the groups who request speaking engagements from Conservation Authority staff on a number of different 'natural history' related topics.

Out and About!

The SVCA has an excellent working relationship with the local tourism association; the Saugeen Country Tourism Association (SCTA). Each year new initiatives are undertaken to increase the area's profile in terms of tourism. This is an excellent relationship for both parties. SVCA is able to provide information for the annual Saugeen Country Guidebook, writing articles that highlight natural features and attractions of the area. Some of the most prominent tourism attractions in the area are Conservation Areas and Lands where numerous recreational potential exists. At the same time, SCTA works hard in promoting Saugeen Country, including our ever popular Conservation Areas. The message is simple....COME SEE WHAT WE'RE ABOUT!

In addition to the above, is SVCA's contribution to one of the most popular canoe routes in southern Ontario; the Saugeen River Canoe Route. SVCA assists with the coordination and production of the canoe route publication. Emphasis here, of course, is to attract tourists to the area/river, promoting the various Conservation Areas en route, and, more importantly, to educate the public about the wise use of this valuable resource.

PUBLIC RELATIONS

Extra, Extra!

For the first time, over the past few years, the Authority has directed effort towards the publication of 'park' brochures for some of its most popular Conservation Areas. This meant updating signage, improving trails and walking paths, establishing new routes, designing new maps and marking access points. Interested individuals can now obtain 'new and improved' information in brochure format, on trails within SVCA lands.

Oh, What Tangled Webs We Weave!

Saugeen Conservation was extremely pleased to begin work on a Web site. The site is all inclusive for all projects and programs associated with the business of 'conservation' within the Saugeen Valley! Check out www.svca.on.ca!

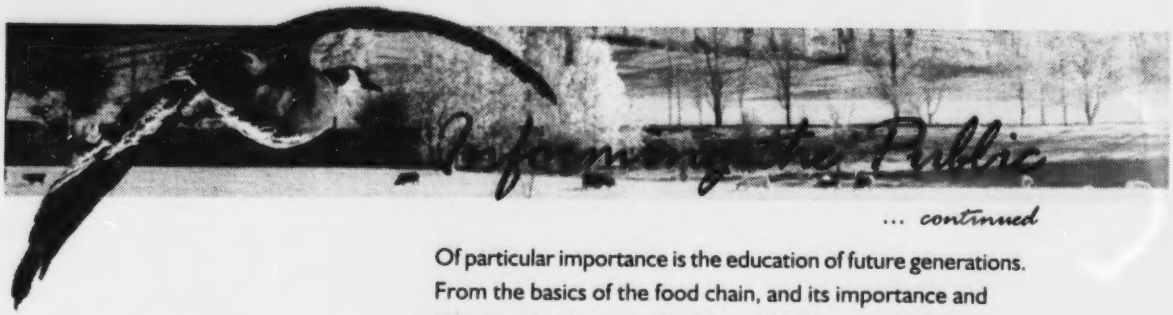
Conservation Education

Boots, Bubbles and Bugs

Conservation Education is perhaps one of the most important components of a Conservation Authority. Virtually every program encompasses some degree of 'education' in making the public aware of environmental issues, potential threats, recreational opportunities, methods by which to conserve resources, etc.

Above: Home page of SVCA's website.

Left: Examples of SVCA's publications.



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Of particular importance is the education of future generations. From the basics of the food chain, and its importance and relevance to our everyday lives, right down to the intricate relationships between predators and prey, conservation education results in a better informed adult population.

The SVCA offers over 50 conservation education programs. Over 7,000 children participate in these programs annually. In carrying out these programs, an important relationship exists with the two main school boards. The WREN education programs are carried out in conjunction with the Grey Sauble Conservation Authority. Involving the same school boards, this results in consistent and efficient programming for all schools involved.

New in 1998 was the development of programs in conjunction with the Bruce Nuclear Power Development Plant (BNPD) in Tiverton. Owned and operated by Ontario Hydro (now Ontario Power Generation), staff from both organizations got together and created the 'DEER' programs. Located on the shores of Lake Huron, BNPD provided 800 hectares (2,000 acres) of undisturbed natural habitat, waiting to be discovered. In addition to the traditional 'conservation' programming related to natural history, was an entirely new avenue of 'energy conservation programming'. The BNPD harnesses steam from the nuclear plants to heat local greenhouses and incorporates wind energy, through the use of large, modern wind generators. The programs have been wildly successful. Summer recreation programs have also been developed for the BNPD, due to the popularity of the regular DEER programs.

Yellow Fish Road

The Yellow Fish Road Stormdrain Marking Project is now complete, watershed-wide. This project was initiated in the SVCA watershed in 1995 with the help of local, Provincial and Federal support. It involves the painting of little yellow fish near stormdrains to remind residents that water in stormdrains is not treated before it returns to the streams, rivers and lakes. Anything poured down the drain will affect all aquatic life downstream. Reading material explaining the reason for the yellow fish was delivered to each household and business in the community as well. Local youth groups and students provided the manpower for this environmental endeavour with paint and supplies donated by local merchants and municipalities. Many thanks to all.

PUBLIC RELATIONS

Nature Day Camps

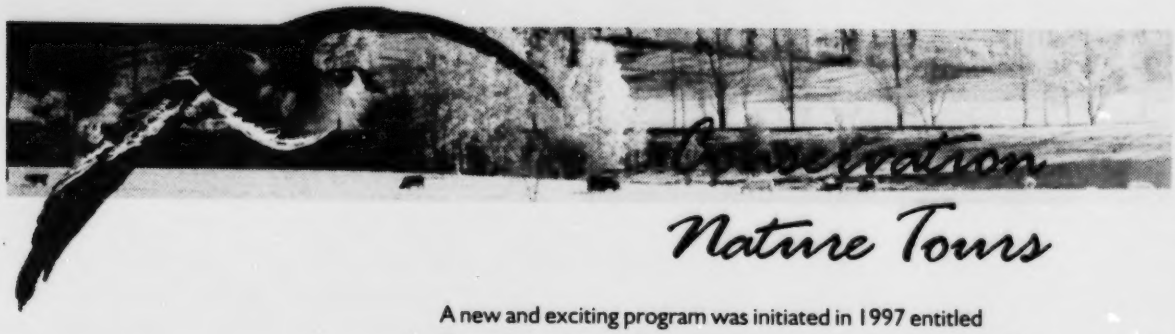
The Conservation Education Department does not take the summers off just because kids are out of school. The SVCA continues to offer programs to groups other than schools in the summer. In 1995 a week long nature day camp pilot project with the Hanover Recreation Department proved so successful that the program has continued to expand. Due to popular demand, two weeks of programs were offered in 1999. The BNPD program includes two weeks of summer nature day camp programs as well. In 1999 two weeks of the programs were also offered to the City of Owen Sound Recreation Department through the Grey Sauble Conservation Authority. Overwhelming response in 1999 indicates that this program is popular wherever it is offered. Other youth group organizations continued to participate in summer programs through the WREN program.

Flood Waters and You

The SVCA "Flood Waters And You" student safety program reaches 2,000 watershed students annually with a flood safety message. Elementary students participate in hypothermia experiments and learn about flood conditions. Hands-on activities are also involved to encourage awareness of the dangers of flood waters.

Above: Implementation of the Yellow Fish Road program, Chesley.

Left: Eager participants in SVCA's winter Conservation Education programs.



Nature Tours

A new and exciting program was initiated in 1997 entitled *Conservation Nature Tours*. A cooperative program between both the Saugeen Valley and Grey Sauble Conservation Authorities, CNT was designed to offer pre-packaged educationally based nature tours within the jurisdictions of both Authorities, including Bruce, Grey and parts of Wellington and Huron Counties.

Eco-tourism is one of the fastest growing markets within the tourism field and fortunately, the Grey Bruce area has some of the most scenic and beautiful natural areas within southern Ontario. This made it a natural for the potential of 'eco-tourism'. In addition, the area is within a day's drive of major populated areas, such as Toronto, Kitchener, Waterloo and London.

1997 was a year for a great deal of research and development prior to the establishment of CNT. Various partners and interest groups, including local tourism associations were called in for input and feedback regarding the feasibility and demand for 'packaged' tours based on a natural theme. Marketing and Business plans soon followed to verify potential and identify target markets.

The federal government made it possible to complete the necessary research above through On-Site (see Special Programs) and Human Resources Development Canada. A grant was then successfully secured in 1998 for over $31,000, to coordinate the project through the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affair's program entitled Rural Job Strategy.

HRDC made it possible to launch the pilot year of the program (1999) with a grant for $60,000 under the Local Labour Market Partnership Program. The private sector was also instrumental in its financial support for CNT.

The success of the program and response to the varied nature trips has been excellent. While both Authorities are responsible for coordinating the trips, implementation is carried out entirely by the private sector, including the services of outfitters, restaurants, special attractions, guides, accommodation facilities, transportation, etc., helping to boost the local economy.

All trips have been designed with a 'conservation' code of ethics,

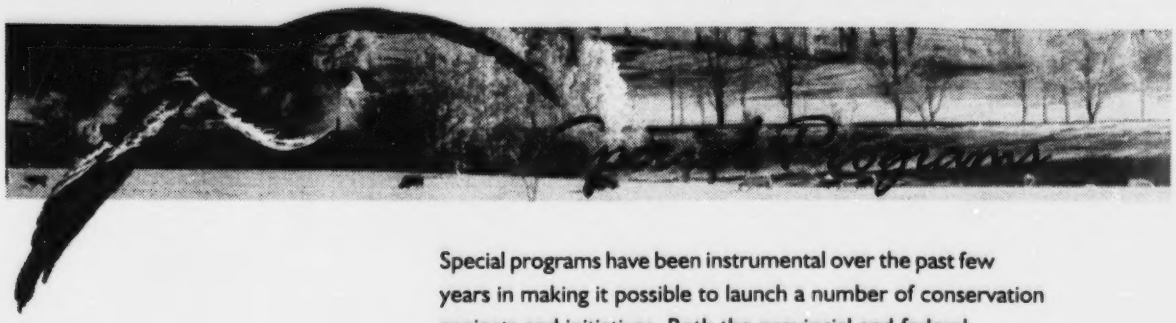
CNT

PUBLIC

RELATIONS

to help ensure the beautiful resources of the area are utilised properly with the least amount of impact. It will also help to guarantee the future sustainability of these areas for the benefit of tourism, the local economy, and, of course, for many future generations to come. All proceeds from CNT go directly back into conservation.

Above and left: Packaged canoeing adventures provided through Conservation Nature Tours.



Special programs have been instrumental over the past few years in making it possible to launch a number of conservation projects and initiatives. Both the provincial and federal governments have offered programs and grants to make these programs become a reality.

The SVCA has also been extremely fortunate in having the support of local schools for the placement of students through the Job Co-op program. This program has provided students with valuable work experience for future career placements, while assisting the SVCA with valuable conservation projects.

Conservation Nature Tours

Funding and assistance provided by:

- On-Site (sponsored by the Alliance of Manufacturers & Exporters Canada and managed by Energy Pathways Inc.) Wages paid by Human Resources Development Canada, HRDC)
- Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs - Rural Job Strategy Fund
- HRDC - Local Labour Market Partnership Program
- Private Sector
- Local Tourism Associations

This very successful program between both the Saugeen Valley and Grey Sauble Conservation Authorities provides nature based tours within Grey, Bruce and parts of Wellington and Huron Counties. Both Authorities and the private sector have worked hard in providing tours which promote the area's vast and beautiful natural resources, while encouraging their wise use and future sustainability.

All tours are coordinated by the two Authorities, utilizing the expertise and resources of the private sector. From 1997 - 1999 the popularity of the tours and the success of the program increased significantly, indicating the need and demand for packaged tours within the jurisdictions of both Authorities. All proceeds from the trips go directly back into conservation.

Household Hazardous Waste Awareness Program

Funding and assistance provided by:

- On-Site (see previous program for complete description)
- Royal Bank, Hanover
- Shell Environmental Fund

This program was launched in 1998, once again, as a joint venture between both the Saugeen Valley and Grey Sauble Conservation Authorities. The goal of this ongoing program is to create a number of educational mediums by which to convey information on the proper handling, storage and disposal of household hazardous wastes. Mediums include posters, flyers, stickers and magnets. The program is targeted for both children and adults. Full program implementation is dependent on contributions and donations received from companies, organizations, industry and other funding sources.

Placement Programs

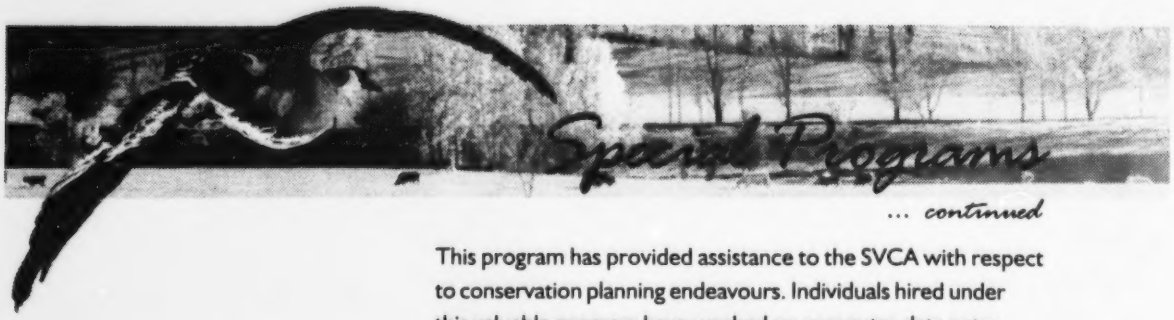
Summer Experience Program

Assistance provided by:

- Provincial government

Above: Clockwise from top: Ben Dasti (Durham), Lana Fleming (Neustadt), Hayley Stout (Cargill), Jennifer Procknow (Hanover), Carrie Musselman (Artemesia Township), Jessica Barron (Hanover).

Left: White trilliums.



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This program has provided assistance to the SVCA with respect to conservation planning endeavours. Individuals hired under this valuable program have worked on computer data entry, field assistance, map work and photo interpretation.

Summer Career Placement Program

Assistance provided by:

- Federal government

This program has provided the Authority with valuable assistance by way of summer park interpreters and guides for its popular Conservation Areas. Students hired under this program work with the general public in providing park details including the natural history of the area. They are also responsible for conducting research with respect to local flora and fauna as well as the coordination and implementation of various park programs for children and adults alike.

Summer Job Services

Assistance provided by:

- Provincial government

This program offers subsidy assistance to hire much needed staff. Students hired under this program have had the opportunity of working in SVCA's Conservation Areas gaining valuable experience in park management, liaison with the general public, gate operations and general maintenance.

Katimavik

Assistance provided by:

- Federal government

This program provides youth with a variety of skills and work experiences across Canada. Students billeted to the SVCA gained work experience in special event coordination, forestry and administrative skills.

Workfare

Assistance provided by:

- Provincial government

The SVCA was fortunate in being able to participate in this worthwhile program. Individuals, while on social assistance, have been able to gain extensive experience at the SVCA in

preparation for full-time employment opportunities. All individuals who were placed with the SVCA in 1998 and 1999 were later hired for full-time or part-time employment by other employers in the area.

Participants were placed in a variety of departments within the Authority, depending on their own individual talents. Work experience was gained in areas of computer skills, retail and sales, public relations, tourism, statistics, reception, maintenance, graphics expertise, administration, etc.

Co-op Student Placement

Assistance provided by:

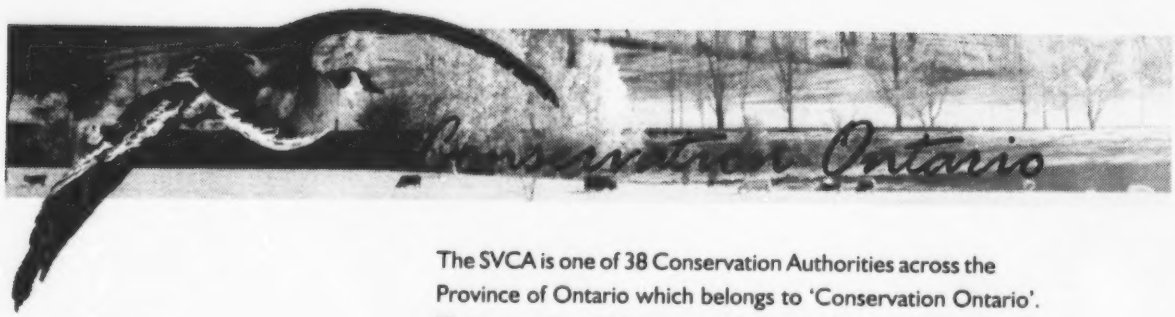
- local high schools

The SVCA has been very fortunate in being able to participate in the high school Co-op placement programs. Numerous students over the three year period were placed with the Authority and gained experience in areas such as forestry, communications, event coordination, conservation education programs, etc.

Many of the students under the Co-op placement program were later hired for summer work.

Above: Summer staff conduct numerous interpretive hikes in SVCA's Conservation Areas. Here, staff teaches campers about the proper methods associated with campfires.

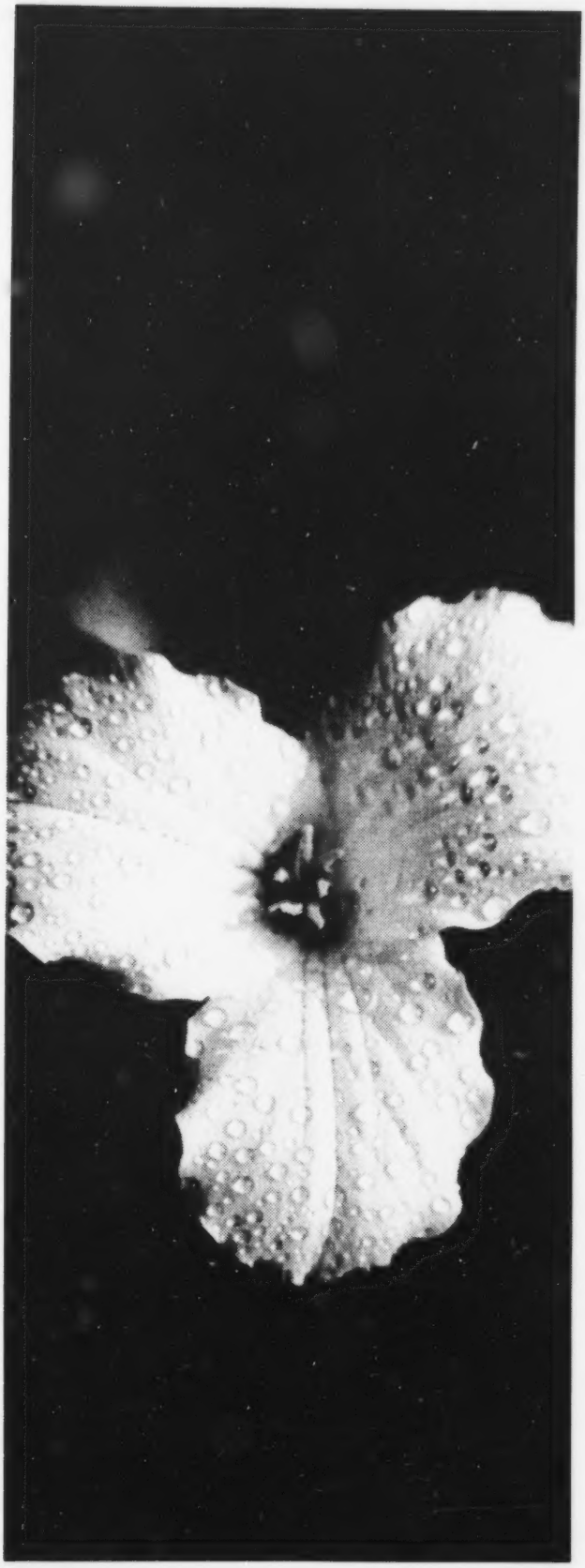
Left: "Chief," the Wise Water Droplet, hugs an eager camper.

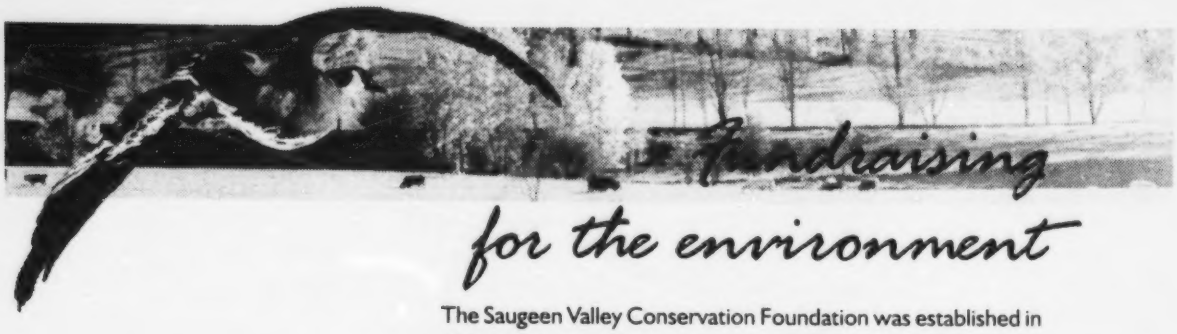


The SVCA is one of 38 Conservation Authorities across the Province of Ontario which belongs to 'Conservation Ontario'. This corporate body was established in 1962 with the goal of assisting Ontario's C.A.'s in achieving their resource management objectives. Some of the accomplishments of this organization over the past three years include:

- Continued co-sponsorship of the annual A.D. Latornell Conservation Symposium where over 500 professionals and students come to learn about the various aspects of 'conservation'.
- Continued support of Ontario Forestry Association's 'Envirothon'. A program of environmental learning and inter-school competition.
- Liaison with the Ministry of Natural Resources on a variety of issues relating to conservation programs and Conservation Authorities, as well as the need to keep lines of communication and understanding open between the two organizations.
- Discussions with lead sponsor 'Dofasco' on the future of collective marketing/fundraising strategies and their continued commitment to conservation.
- Assistance with Conservation Authority/Area input to the Southern Ontario Recreational Atlas.
- Public communication and information campaign in support of the DFO/CA agreements to publicise the new revised Interim Fish Habitat referral process in which C.A.'s play a role.
- Assistance in the print promotion opportunities in Camping Life and Fuel/MEDTT magazines.
- Continued monitoring of provincial legislation for impacts on Conservation Authorities.
- Developed and undertook a conservationist-in-residence program at the University of Guelph.

SAUGEEN CONSERVATION





fundraising for the environment

The Saugeen Valley Conservation Foundation was established in 1973 as a fundraising arm of the Saugeen Valley Conservation Authority. Much needed funds are raised on an annual basis by the Foundation for conservation programs and projects which are established by the Conservation Authority.

The Foundation hosts a number of special events each year, for the purpose of raising funds, as well as creating awareness about the Foundation, the Authority, its lands, and important conservation issues throughout the watershed.

Special Events

Maple Madness

Each year the Foundation hosts its annual Maple Syrup Festival at the Saugeen Bluffs Conservation Area, north of Paisley. The Festival draws approximately 5,000-6,000 people and features a number of attractions and festivities. Visitors will find plenty of pancakes and sausages, maple syrup production demonstrations, exhibitors, horse-drawn wagon rides, kid's activities, live entertainment, heritage farm equipment display, portable sawmills and a complete living history component featuring a full pioneer and civil war encampment. Black powder demonstrations and mock battles are especially entertaining at this popular festival.

Festival games are also a highlight as municipal councils and the public alike step into the competition ring to participate in log sawing, pancake eating and a number of other games, geared to the maple theme. Of course, winners always come away with a generous supply of real maple syrup!

Over the past three years, this event has become a major fundraiser for the Foundation, resulting in between $4,000 - $8,500 (annually), thanks to the participating public, the generosity of sponsors and the help of hundreds of dedicated volunteers.

The Maple Syrup Festival has been ongoing since 1973. In 1996 the Conservation Authority made a decision to turn the event over to the Foundation, where it has become a fundraising event. Prior to this period the event was hosted by the Authority as purely a demonstration event on the production of maple syrup.

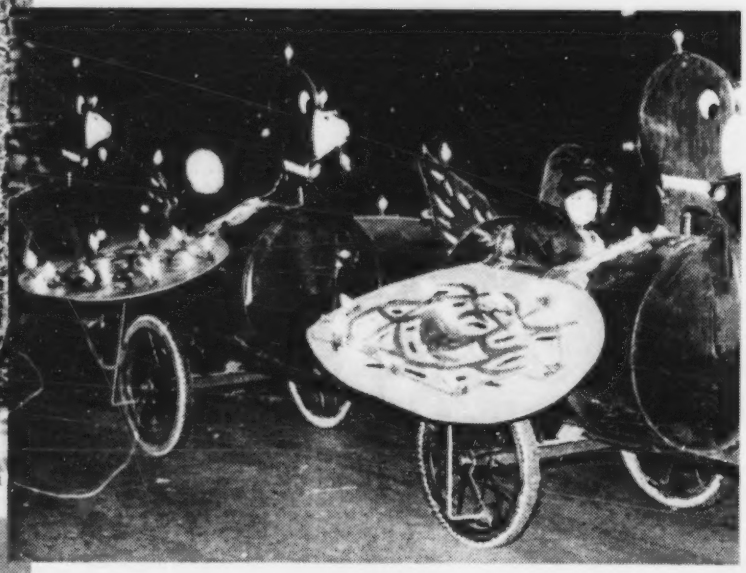
SAUGEEN FOUNDATION

Memorial Grove Ceremony

Each year the Foundation hosts a Memorial Grove Ceremony for all those who have participated in the program throughout the previous year. Attendance at this function averages over 1,000 people. This special event has become one of increasing importance and closure for many people who have had trees planted in memory of a loved one. Families of the deceased are all invited to attend the event, to participate in the planting of the ceremonial tree, enjoy the fellowship of each other and attend a small luncheon.

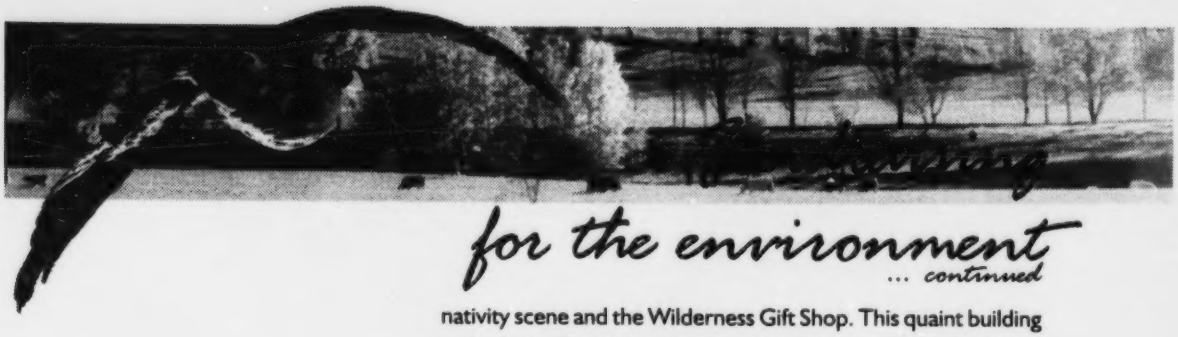
Christmas in the Country

This increasingly popular event is fairly new (established in 1993), however, is quickly becoming a favourite! Each year, the Headquarters Conservation Area, south of Hanover, is transformed into a Christmas wonderland. Thousands of lights adorn the tree lined pathways of this enchanting park. Visitors can also enjoy the warm glow of hundreds of candle lanterns as they walk to and from each of the buildings on the grounds to participate in the various activities. Santa's workshop hosts a bird feeder workshop and the Christmas cafe is the place to sit and enjoy the live entertainment while sipping on a hot cup of cocoa and munching on a homemade cookie. The Santa Hut is always a popular stop, as is the live



Above: Little tots enjoy the motorised duck ride at Christmas in the Country.

Left: Headquarters Conservation Area.



for the environment

... continued

nativity scene and the Wilderness Gift Shop. This quaint building tucked into the pines and surrounded by fishponds, is the place to go for hundreds of unique gift ideas.

Over the past three years, this event has truly flourished. The potential for fundraising dollars is quickly becoming a reality.

Conservation Dinner

This special event takes place every other year and always caters to a 'sold-out' audience. In addition to a great meal and plenty of terrific auction items this function is indeed a great deal of fun for all those involved. Various auctions are held throughout the evening and participation is encouraged all around. Each dinner has a unique theme where costumes are encouraged. In addition, every dinner features live music and special entertainment during the dinner hour.

This event results in the raising of between $8,000 to $10,000 every other year.

Funds

Anyone interested in donating to the Foundation can direct their contribution towards various funds. The funds were established in 1989 as a way to secure donations through the interests of the general public. Conservation Education, Wetlands, Conservation Areas, Canoe, Fishing, Memorial Grove and General are the funds to which individuals can contribute at any time during the course of the year.

'Friends of the Saugeen'

This popular membership drive program provides residents with an excellent opportunity of keeping in touch with their local Conservation Authority. For set fees, depending on the type of membership, individuals receive regular mailings, publications and various updates on conservation programs and initiatives.

Conservation Scholarship

Each year, the Foundation is proud to provide a $1,000 scholarship to a student interested in conducting research within the Saugeen watershed. The program stipulates that the research must focus on a topic of natural history, located

SAUGEEN FOUNDATION

within the watershed jurisdiction. Past programs have consisted of a study on amphibians and reptiles, as well as research on butterfly species (resulting in a butterfly checklist). The program has regularly received support from other related organizations, such as the Saugeen Field Naturalists.

The Wilderness Gift Shop

Over the past three years, the Wilderness Gift Shop on the grounds of the Headquarters Conservation Area has enjoyed considerable success. Run entirely by volunteers this charming speciality shop features numerous items related to a natural history theme. Books, clothing items, such as T-shirts and sweatshirts, bird houses and feeders, nature jewellery, unique crafts, carvings, kid's toys, hand-painted paddles and stained glass are just some of the items available in the shop. Customers are always notified that all proceeds go directly to conservation.

In 1999, the Wilderness Shop realised a profit of over $6,500. All proceeds in this case go to improvements at the Headquarters Conservation Area.

Above: SVCF Chairman Laurie Bowen draws a winning ticket from the many draws held each year by the Foundation.

Left: Conservation woodlot.

Volunteering for the environment

... continued

Volunteers

The Foundation is extremely dependent on its army of volunteers to do all its fundraising endeavours. This amazing group of dedicated individuals concerned about conservation and work in the environment, dedicate hours of hard work for a cause in which they truly believe. Volunteers each have their own talents to lend to the Foundation. Their efforts are tireless and extremely commendable.

In 1999, the Foundation teamed together with the Saugeen Valley Conservation Authority in establishing a policy for the recognition of volunteers. As a result, each year, volunteers from both organizations are to be invited to a special recognition ceremony to see their efforts acknowledged and appropriately rewarded.

We thank the following major Cash Sponsors for their support over the past three years (over $1,000).

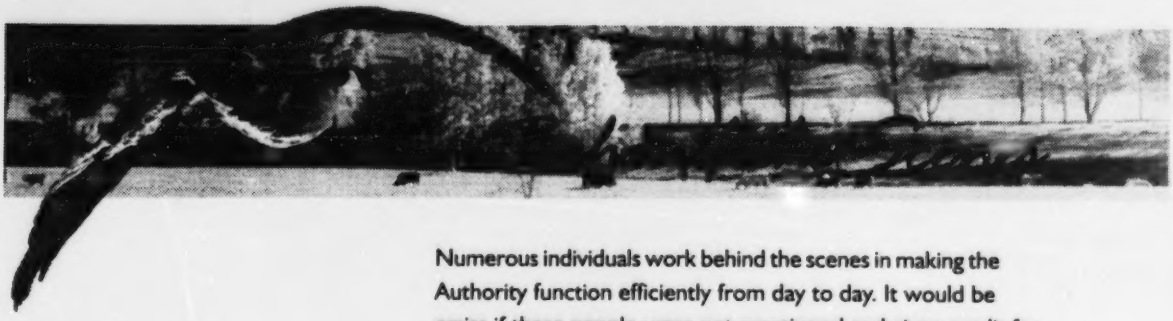
Tanner and Pearson Funeral Home, Walkerton • Grant's Your Independent Grocer, Hanover • ECL (Electrical Contacts Limited), Hanover • Royal Bank, Hanover • Paisley Kinsmen • Bruce Municipal Telephone System/ BMI, Tiverton • Saugeen Country Tourism Association, Hanover • Mary Sutherland, Guelph • John Sutherland and Sons, Guelph • Shell Environmental Fund • Canada Trust - Friends of the Environment • Laurie Bowen, Scone • Margaret Sutherland • CIBC • Wright's IGA, Walkerton • Hollywood North Video, Hanover

In-Kind (over $1,000)

Voisin's Maple Syrup Products, Formosa • CKNX Radio, Wingham • Bayshore Broadcasting, Owen Sound • Welbeck Sawmill, Durham

SAUGEEN FOUNDATION

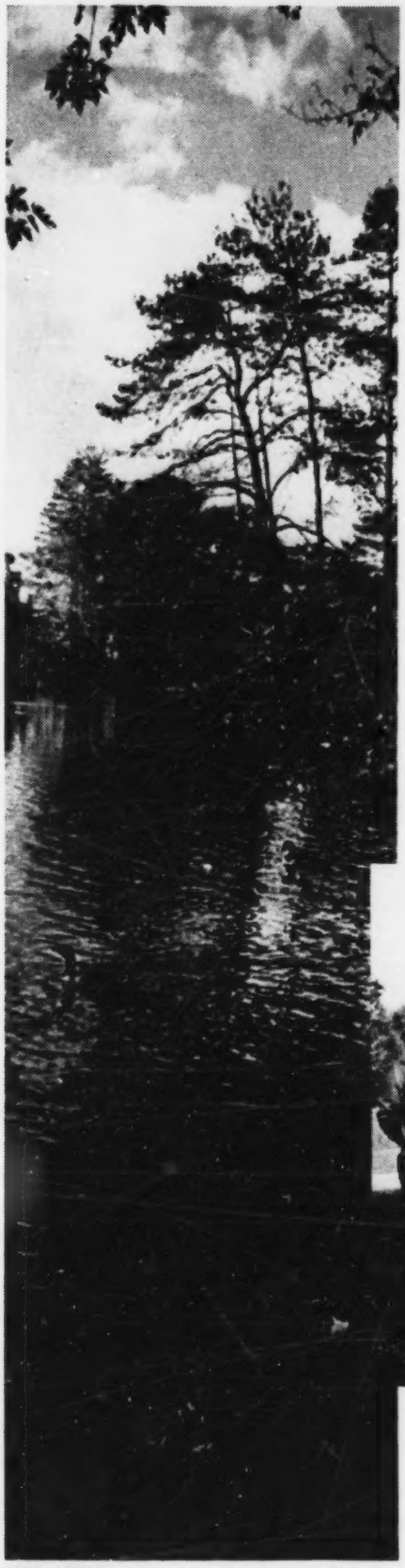
A piper leads a procession of over 1,000 people to the tree planting at the Foundation's annual Memorial Grove Ceremony.



Numerous individuals work behind the scenes in making the Authority function efficiently from day to day. It would be amiss if these people were not mentioned and given credit for their hard work and dedication. The administrative staff are some of those people who ensure that finances are looked after, paper work is completed to specifications and that courteous and friendly staff are available to answer telephone calls and greet the general public. These people are important and are relied on heavily by the other members of the staff as well as the general public.

Individuals in the maintenance and parks departments are key players in the upkeep of Conservation Areas and lands, and in ensuring that vehicles are properly serviced. Their efforts are often the first to be observed and depended upon by the general public. In the various camping parks, staff must put in long hours to keep these areas groomed and well-maintained for thousands of visitors each year.

A great deal of hard work and dedication are the key elements to the individuals who work within these departments.



SVCA Staff

Back Row, (from left to right)

Lorne McCullough, Assistant Park Superintendent • Gary Senior, Environmental Planner • Jim Penner, Forest Management Coordinator • Jim Coffey, General Manager / Secretary - Treasurer • Don Smith, Director of Water Management and Planning • Stuart Byers, Field Services Coordinator • Dave Pybus, Director of Flood Warning and Land Management • John Steffen, Conservation Area Superintendent • Ron McManus, Conservation Area Superintendent

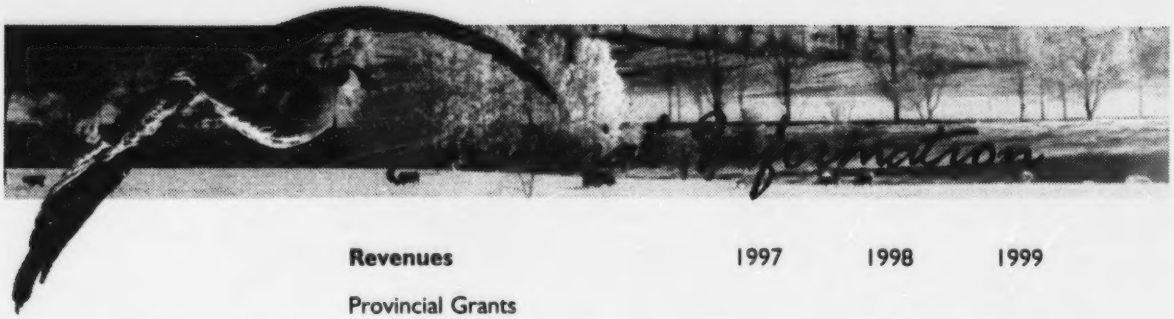
Front Row, (from left to right)

Shannon Wood, Director of Communications • Jo-Anne Harbinson, Environmental Planning Technician • Bob Burrell, Maintenance Coordinator • Anne Schneider, Accounting Clerk • Bonnie Sherman, Executive Secretary • Nancy Bauman, Director of Finance

Missing:

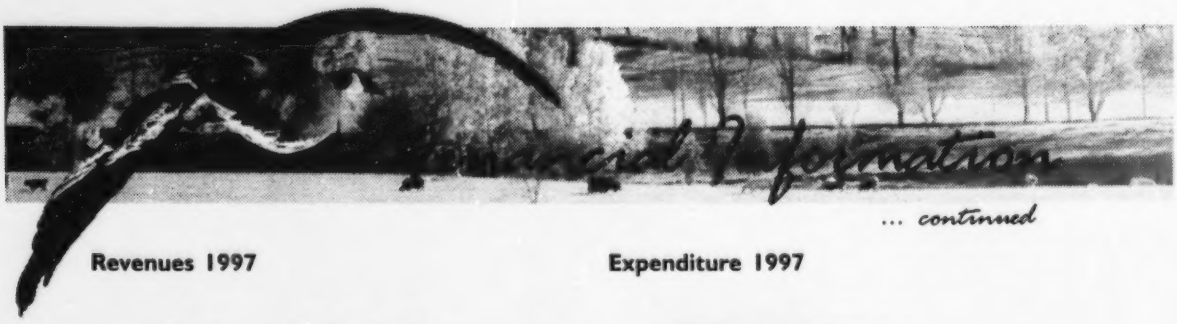
Nancy Griffin, Conservation Education Coordinator • Chris Hughes, Conservation Nature Tours Coordinator • Donna Kuntz, Forest Management Technician • Judy McArthur, Conservation Area Superintendent

Left: Headquarters Conservation Area.



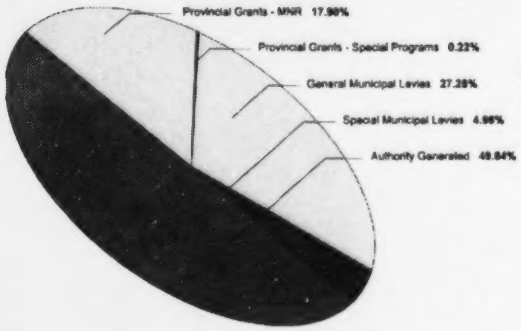
Revenues	1997	1998	1999
Provincial Grants			
MNR	278,026	183,092	131,811
Special Programs	3,282	23,285	157,786
Municipal Levies			
General	423,689	402,505	402,505
Special	77,059	46,405	64,659
Authority - Generated			
Saugeen Parks	198,264	214,395	221,792
Agicultural Lands	39,385	33,438	38,480
Vehicles & Equipment	54,906	59,487	57,181
Interest	30,494	45,605	45,020
Donations	28,663	58,309	24,084
Miscellaneous	34,624	18,990	68,236
Forestry Service/Products	261,101	518,700	258,164
Education	7,244	21,788	22,615
Planning/Regulations	15,859	29,814	27,252
Partnerships	100,310	137,448	34,393
sub-total	770,850	1,137,974	797,217
Total Revenue	**1,552,906**	**1,793,261**	**1,553,978**

Expenditures	1997	1998	1999
Administration	279,724	331,384	310,293
Program Operations			
Flood Control	217,681	219,744	186,206
Forestry/Land Management	291,604	267,125	253,968
Water Management	99,824	91,895	94,770
Community Relations	75,109	102,113	122,573
Conservation Education	42,159	51,164	40,198
sub total	726,377	732,041	697,715
Capital - Water & Recreation	149,616	287,362	136,047
Saugeen Parks	212,515	212,966	236,058
Agricultural Lands	23,591	14,066	18,082
Special Programs	3,282	8,213	139,296
Interest/Bad Debt	2,074	935	1,202
Vehicles & Equipment	79,866	71,330	39,469
Other Expenditures	9,992	14,317	33,379
Total Expenditures	**1,487,037**	**1,672,614**	**1,611,541**

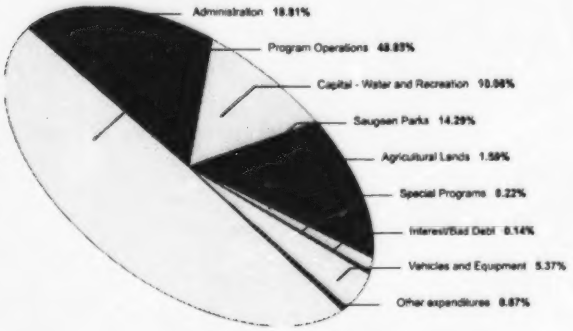


... continued

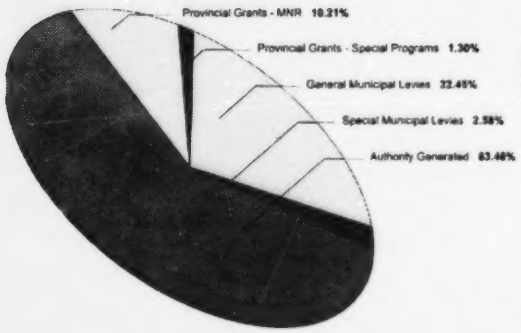
Revenues 1997


Provincial Grants - MNR 17.90%
Provincial Grants - Special Programs 0.22%
General Municipal Levies 27.28%
Special Municipal Levies 4.98%
Authority Generated 49.64%

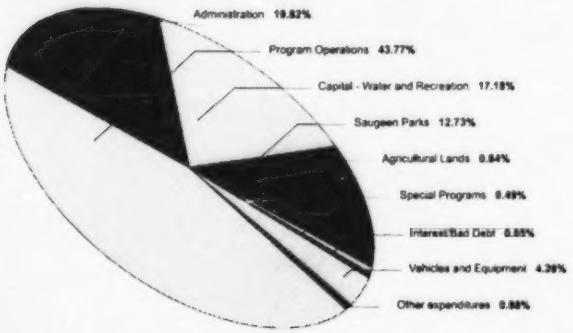
Expenditure 1997



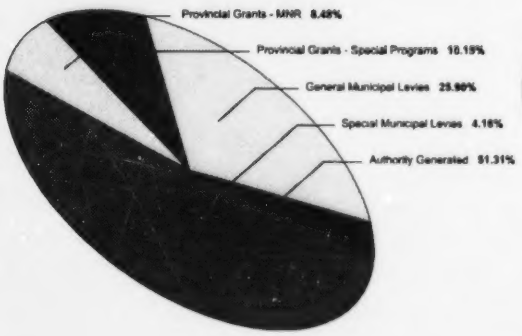
Revenues 1998


Provincial Grants - MNR 10.21%
Provincial Grants - Special Programs 1.30%
General Municipal Levies 22.45%
Special Municipal Levies 2.58%
Authority Generated 63.46%

Expenditure 1998



Revenues 1999


Provincial Grants - MNR 8.48%
Provincial Grants - Special Programs 10.15%
General Municipal Levies 25.90%
Special Municipal Levies 4.16%
Authority Generated 51.31%

Expenditure 1999